

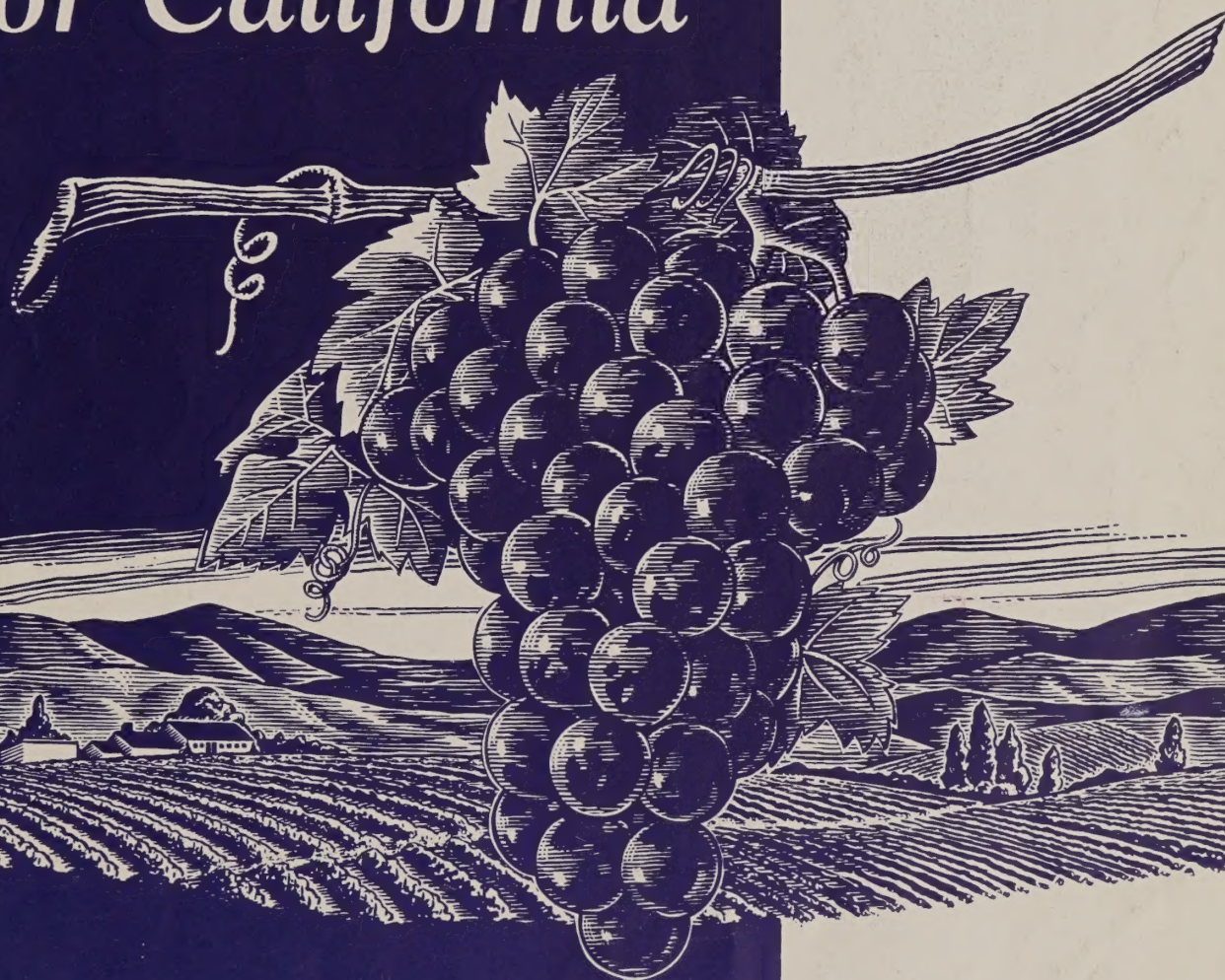
# New Grape Varieties for California

Index \*

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# New Grape Varieties

During the past several years, many new grape varieties have been introduced to California. Most of these new varieties are hybrids, the results of the grape breeding programs carried on by the University of California College of Agriculture at Davis, and the U. S. Horticultural Field Station at Fresno. At least one variety which has attained prominence, the *ITALIA*, is an importation, originating near Rome, Italy. One other new grape, the *CRYSTAL*, is a hybrid resulting from experiments carried on by P. J. Divizich, owner of the extensive Highland Vineyards in southern Tulare County.

All of these new varieties show certain improvement over the older sorts—either heavier production, earlier ripening, improved eating quality, greater suitability for distant shipping and storage, or adaptability to a wider range of soils and climate. A good portion of the breeding program of the U. C. College of Agriculture has been pointed towards seedlessness in table grapes, resulting in the *PERLETTE* and *DELIGHT* varieties and, more recently, the *BEAUTY SEEDLESS*—a new black grape.

It takes a number of years of testing under various conditions of soil and climate to truly evaluate any new grape variety. Of those varieties introduced in the 1940's, which are grouped in this pamphlet under the heading of "Grapes of Fairly Recent Introduction," several have found a place of commercial importance in certain grape growing areas. Probably the most valuable variety in this group is the *CARDINAL*, originating in Fresno, and introduced in 1946. It has been found to be of most commercial importance in the early grape growing districts, which include Coachella, Imperial and Borego Valleys, and the southern San Joaquin Valley. *PERLETTE*

and *DELIGHT*—particularly the former—have also found favor and brought high returns in the earlier districts of California.

Of the varieties listed under the heading of "New Grape Varieties" in this booklet, *ITALIA* and *BLACK ROSE* both appear to have distinctive qualities which will warrant their being grown extensively, both on a commercial scale and in the home garden. The same is probably true of *QUEEN*, the newest in red grapes, although it has not been sufficiently tested to fully establish its merit. All three have large berries, large bunches and bear heavily. Their appearance is outstanding, and all have excellent eating quality. The other variety included in this group, *BEAUTY SEEDLESS*, is the newest of them all, having only been named in the summer of 1953. It is a jet-black seedless grape, ripening with *PERLETTE*, and shows much promise of becoming important commercially in the early districts.

While this pamphlet deals principally with the very new and recently new varieties of grapes, we also list and describe practically all of the older, well-known varieties of table grapes which possess sufficient merit to warrant their being grown, either commercially or otherwise.

Included also are the best known varieties of the Eastern, or slip-skin grapes. These are of little commercial importance in the West, but are well known in California, and especially by those citizens who were born east of the Rockies—and that comprises a good share of the adult population. They make excellent arbor grapes and are grown in home gardens in all areas of California, but succeed best along or adjacent to the coast.



✓  
**The ITALIA**, also known as Italian Muscat, is a hybrid originating near Rome, Italy. Imported about ten years ago, it has been bearing commercially in California for the past four or five years on a limited acreage. Both berries and bunches are large, and it bears much more heavily than the old Muscat of Alexandria. A beautiful amber color when ripe, with a delicious Muscat flavor. It has been grown in various districts of the State, sufficiently to prove that it has a wide range of adaptability—doing well in soils and climates where the older Muscat will not succeed.

Its adaptability, heavy bearing tendencies and delicious flavor make it a most desirable variety for both commercial and home garden planting.

Fruit from the limited acreage in bearing has received immediate acceptance on California markets, at excellent prices. The skin is quite tender, and the fruit must be carefully handled in picking and packing as it has a tendency to discolor if bruised. Can be successfully shipped to Eastern markets if properly handled.

Definitely, one of the best of the new varieties. Ripens late August to early September.



✓  
**THE QUEEN** is a magnificent appearing new red grape, originating at Davis, California, and is a hybrid between Muscat Hamburg and Thompson Seedless. Both berries and bunches are large and beautiful in appearance. It bears so heavily that the flower clusters must be reduced at the time of blooming in order to grow fruit of the highest quality. It gives good results when properly grown. It follows the Red Malaga in ripening and matures slightly in advance of Tokay. If not overcropped, the fruit ships very well and keeps well in storage, being much better in this respect than the Tokay. It has a larger berry than the Tokay, and the cluster is exceptionally well formed and produces uniform berry size. Small plantings are in bearing in the Parlier area of Fresno County and southern Tulare County. It has a rather tough skin, which partly accounts for its good shipping and storage qualities, and has surprisingly good eating qualities when fully mature.

This variety requires further testing to truly evaluate its worth, but it has so many good qualities it stands a good chance of finding its place among the top-ranking table grapes in California.



## BLACK ROSE



**BLACK ROSE** is a hybrid, resulting from a cross of Damas Rose X Black Monukka X Ribier, and was introduced in 1951. Originated at U. S. Horticultural Field Station in Fresno.

The fruit clusters are large and well-filled, but not compact. Berries are large, jet-black with light grayish bloom. Vine is vigorous and productive, and bears well on both cane and spur pruning.

It ripens in early mid-season, 5 to 7 days ahead of Ribier in the Fresno area. In eating quality it is far superior to Ribier, having tender flesh and a distinctive delicious flavor. The bearing acreage is limited and located in Fresno and Tulare Counties. Most of the crop has been sold at excellent prices in California markets. Some fruit has been shipped east and exported as far away as Cuba. Because of its tenderness, it must be picked at the right season and carefully handled and packed for distant shipment.

Because of its heavy bearing, handsome appearance and delicious eating quality, it is destined for considerable commercial planting in certain districts.

This grape has been grown mostly on the heavier sandy loam types of soil. It should do its best on soils where Ribier grows and produces satisfactorily. This would include Coachella as well as the San Joaquin Valley, particularly the southern part.

It is worthy of trial in home gradens in any area where grapes will succeed at all.

**BEAUTY SEEDLESS** is the newest of all the varieties we list and will require further time for proper evaluation. Its acceptance on the market may depend on consumer education because most people associate seedlessness in a grape with the green or amber Thompson—and this variety is jet-black, with a heavy bluish bloom. It is very attractive in appearance and has berries about the same size as Thompson Seedless. It ripens with the Perlette, and considering its very early maturity, has excellent eating quality. One of its advantages over other very early ripening grapes is that the clusters are not too compact, and it responds very well to girdling. It too is a hybrid, originating at the U. C. College of Agriculture at Davis, and they consider it to have more promise than any other variety recently introduced, assuming that the consuming public can be educated to accept a black seedless grape. It is certainly worthy of extensive trial, particularly in the early table grape districts.



# Grapes of Fairly Recent Introduction

All of the grapes listed under this heading were introduced to the public at some time during the 1940's, or not later than the year 1950. We list them in approximately what we consider to be the order of their importance from a commercial standpoint.

**CARDINAL:** This now well-known early red table grape got off to a fast start in popularity shortly after its introduction in 1946. The fabulous prices paid in the Eastern markets for the early fruit shipments gained for it wide-spread and valuable publicity; so much so that the rush for cuttings and grafting scions, by growers and would-be growers, can be compared to the gold rush in the early days of California. Almost everyone in the table grape growing business—or fancying it—rushed to “stake their claim,” and prices as high as \$1.00 each were paid for unrooted cuttings or grafting scions. By 1950 approximately 1500 acres were growing in California and about 1200 acres in Arizona. Many were planted in areas where the soil and climate were not conducive to early ripening and high quality. Because of its newness some growers did not know the proper methods for growing it, and their results were disappointing. As a result, some of this early acreage has been taken out or grafted over, and for a while it lost in popularity. However, once its requirements as to soil, climate and proper cultural methods were understood, fruit of beautiful appearance, exceptional high quality and early maturity was produced, (as it had been produced by some from the beginning), and the consuming public continues to pay fancy prices to enjoy its early goodness.

It originated in Fresno as a hybrid between Ribier and Tokay, both of which mature in mid-season; but for some reason, nature endowed it with the quality of early ripening. It ripens from 7 to 10 days ahead of Thompson Seedless in the earliest districts, and as much as three weeks ahead of this variety in the Fresno district.

It is vigorous and productive, and as three or four clusters are often produced on each growing shoot, it is advisable to thin some off when the shoots are 12 to 18 inches long, pre-blossom state, in order to produce fruit of superior size and quality. The fruit color is a rich, dark red with grayish bloom. Although they vary somewhat in size, the berries are large—an inch or more in diameter—and nearly round. The sturdy clusters weigh about 1½ pounds. They ship well, and the berries adhere well to the stems and have a medium tough skin and firm flesh. The eating quality is excellent, with a slight Muscat flavor noticeable when fully mature.

This variety has definitely established an important place in the table grape growing picture, and the production is increasing steadily each year. It is most valuable grown in the early maturing districts. It has been planted in soils ranging from light sandy loams to heavy sandy loams. While earlier maturity has been obtained on the light sandy loams, a better set of fruit appears to occur on the heavier sandy loams.

**PERLETTE:** This very early seedless variety is a cross between two little known European varieties and originated at Davis, California. The name PERLETTE is French and means “little pearl,” indicating the translucent appearance of the mature fruit. The fruit is almost round, similar in color to Thompson Seedless, and is the earliest seedless grape to ripen—about two weeks earlier than Thompson Seedless. The berries are about one-third larger than Thompson and adhere better, with less shattering. The skin is very thin and tender; flesh firm, crisp and juicy with unique flavor. Does not discolor from bruises on handling and keeps very well. Largest plantings are in Coachella Valley, and it brought the highest prices of any variety shipped during the 1953 season, Cardinal being second. However, it requires special cultural methods to produce good quality fruit, making it more expensive to grow than most other varieties. It is estimated there were about 300 acres in bearing in 1953, with some additional plantings being made each year. Being at present the earliest commercially grown table grape to ripen, it has definitely established its place. Plantings will necessarily be limited, due to the fact that the palatability of even the best fruit is inferior to the mature Thompson Seedless. Therefore, it could not compete with this better known variety if both were available at the same season.

It is also recommended for planting in the home garden in the cooler coastal areas, where Thompson Seedless seldom reaches maturity and the berries remain very small. In these areas both Perlette and Delight produce fruit of good quality and normal berry size.

**DELIGHT:** This is a sister seedling of Perlette, developed at the same time. It is about a week later in maturing than Perlette and is not as vigorous or productive, but it has other advantages which make it superior, in some respects, to its sister variety. Perlette is neutral in flavor and not as palatable as Thompson; whereas Delight has a low acidity that enables it to reach a palatable stage sooner than Thompson. Unlike Perlette, the fruit sweetens almost as well as Thompson Seedless, and many people prefer its flavor at prime maturity, to Thompson. Delight has a mild Muscat flavor when mature, but unfortunately this is very variable. Perlette can never be profitable for raisins because of its overly compact clusters and low sugar content; whereas Delight rates superior, or at least equal, to Thompson as a raisin and is hard to distinguish from that variety. Both Delight and Perlette appear to be superior to Thompson as a canning grape. Delight is somewhat less heavily planted than Perlette, perhaps mainly because it is later in ripening and not as productive.



**CALMERIA:** Introduced in 1950, a seedling of the better known Almeria (Ohanez), the Calmeria is a late shipping and storage table grape, maturing late September to early October in Central California. Berries are large and firm with a tough skin. Fruit color is greenish yellow, and the eating quality is very good. Grows vigorously and bears heavily. Can be successfully grown where Emperor and Almeria succeed and has reached commercial importance mainly in the late table grape growing areas of the southern San Joaquin Valley. It is generally considered superior to Almeria because the berries are larger and not so tightly set on the cluster, making them better adapted to commercial packing. In addition, it is apparently not affected by "Ohanez spot," which does at times affect Almeria, reducing its quality.

**CRYSTAL:** A hybrid produced by P. J. Divizich, well-known and extensive grower of table grapes in southern Tulare County. He has fruited this variety for about five years, and on his lighter sandy soils it matures 10 to 14 days ahead of Thompson Seedless. Berries and bunches are large, only moderately compact, and resemble Thompson in color, but are about twice the size. The flesh is crisp and crackling and of excellent flavor. It is a good keeper and shipper, and most of his crop has been sold for export at prices averaging about \$4.00 per chest. He has two plantings, and the one on the heavier soil matures some weeks later than that on the lighter sandy soil, reducing its desirability, for the export trade prefers a white grape of early maturity. It has a weakness in the fact that the stems have a tendency to darken rather quickly, but this does not affect the keeping quality of the fruit itself, and the berries adhere well. Recently planted in a limited commercial way in Coachella Valley, with still unknown results. The fruit has very fine eating quality and is desirable for home planting, especially in the warm interior sections. Mr. Divizich has never had sufficient fruit to take care of his export demand. We believe that Crystal can be profitably grown on the lighter sandy loams in the early districts.

**GOLDEN MUSCAT:** A hybrid between the richly flavored Muscat and the green American grape, Diamond. It retains the golden green color and slip-skin characteristic of Diamond, but has gained the rich flavor of the Muscat. Grows vigorously and bears heavily everywhere in California, coast or desert. Can be grown as bush or on trellis. This is a most popular home garden variety, due both to its excellent eating quality and wide range of adaptability. Apparently there are no extensive commercial plantings, as it is not found on the market. Ripens middle to late August.

**SCARLET:** The jet-black berries yield bright red juice that is not only delicious, but makes some of the most beautifully colored jellies and jams imaginable. It is not seedless nor particularly desirable for eating fresh, but worthy of a place in the home garden for the qualities above mentioned. Very ornamental because the foliage turns to bronze and bright red in the Fall. Ripens in late August.

**THOMUSCAT:** (Sometimes referred to as Seedless Muscat). Originated in Fresno at Henderson's Experimental Gardens. Result of crossing Thompson Seedless and Muscat. Ripens about ten days earlier than Thompson, in similar soil and climate. Berries are naturally about the size of a girdled Thompson, which it resembles in appearance, except that the berries are nearly round. Makes a good raisin, but has the fault of the clusters sometimes being too compact, resulting in some spoilage of the fruit. A few small experimental commercial plantings have been made in the Fresno area, as well as a larger planting in Borego Valley by Di Giorgio. The fruit has a moderate Muscat flavor and is seedless. Was introduced in 1949, but so far has attained no definite commercial popularity despite its evident possibilities.

## *Popular Table Grape Varieties*

Under this heading we list most of the so-called European varieties now being grown in California, either commercially or for home use. Practically all of them were imported from Europe, a few from Asia, and all of them have been at home in California for many years and are well known. They are of the vinifera type and have been grown here for so long they have come to be known popularly as California varieties.

**ALMERIA:** (Ohanez). This is the variety formerly imported from Spain in sawdust kegs or chests, which is now quite extensively grown in the Central San Joaquin Valley. It is a large-sized greenish white fruit of good eating quality. The bunches are large and shouldered; it has a rather tough skin and keeps and ships very well, ripening in early October.

**BLACK HAMBURG:** A great favorite as a juice and table grape. Berries large, dark purple, black when fully ripe. Juicy, sweet and vinous. Strong grower and an excellent arbor grape. September.

**BLACK MONUKKA:** (Sometimes called Black Thompson Seedless). Large, reddish black berries are entirely seedless, borne in large, loose clusters. It is sweet and crisp and of very good eating quality. Mainly grown as a table and shipping grape, but also makes a good raisin. Ripens late August to September.

**BLACK MUSCAT:** Berries large, round and black, produced on loose, medium clusters. Flavor similar to the Muscat of Alexandria. A favorite in home plantings. Ripens August to September.

**EMPEROR:** This is the latest of the red table grapes and ranks first in quantity grown for the market. Produces large, shouldered clusters of elongated berries,



light red to reddish purple, moderately firm, thick, and tough-skinned. Cordon pruned. This is the most popular of all storage grapes, ideal for that purpose. The fruit keeps well and is distributed throughout the holiday season and well up into the early spring months. It has been a consistent money-maker over a period of many years. Prefers a medium heavy sandy loam and is grown mainly in the eastern portion of Fresno, Tulare and Kern Counties. Exeter in Tulare County is the center of production. Ripens late September through October.

➤ **LADY FINGER:** (Rish Baba). Medium-sized, long loose clusters; berries are large, very elongated with one side nearly flat. Pale green to light yellow, tender and thin-skinned. September. Olivette Blanche is also known as the Lady Finger grape and closely resembles the Rish Baba.

➤ **MUSCAT:** This is the famous "Muscat of Alexandria." Clusters medium-sized, shouldered, loose, with large conical berries. The berries are green to amber and have that rich, unforgettable Muscat flavor, known to almost everyone. Well-known for the wine which bears its name; makes the choicest raisins and is also prized on the fresh fruit market. Ripens September.

➤ **MALAGA:** (White). Large oval, yellowish green berries, which are crisp and of excellent eating quality. One of the popular shipping grapes. Ripens late August, early September.

➤ **RED MALAGA:** Large, round, sparkling red berries; firm, crisp flesh; an excellent table variety and a valuable shipping grape. Suitable for arbors. August.

➤ **RIBIER:** One of the largest and most handsome grapes grown in California and the most popular black grape for shipping and storage. The big, round, almost black berries are very sweet and of good eating quality. Ripens early, but the loose, medium-sized bunches will hang on the vines for many weeks. Bush type. August.

➤ **TOKAY:** (Flame Tokay). Next to Emperor, this is the most important red table and shipping grape grown. Large oblong berries, borne in big clusters. Berries are a beautiful medium to dark red, covered with lilac bloom. Flesh is firm, juicy and crackling, with good vinous flavor. A heavy producer. Ships and keeps well. September.

➤ **THOMPSON SEEDLESS:** This is the well-known early-ripening seedless grape, so popular with everyone. It is known as the "triple-purpose" grape as it is grown extensively for raisins, as an early table grape, and also for making wine. Produces enormous crops, with large bunches of delicious, sweet, mildly-flavored berries, greenish amber in color. Widely planted, but the heaviest crops and best quality are produced in the warm interior sections. An excellent arbor grape. Ripens early July to August, depending on location.

## American Varieties

The grapes listed under this heading are also known as the Eastern or "slip-skin" and are native to Eastern United States where they are grown extensively. They are of little commercial importance in California, but are widely grown in home gardens for their delicious eating quality. They are mostly strong growing and make excellent arbor grapes. They do well anywhere on the Pacific Coast, excepting the hottest interior sections, and are at their best adjacent to the coast.

➤ **CATAWBA:** Medium-large, round, coppery red to purple berries; rich flavor; vigorous producer; table and wine variety. August to September.

➤ **CONCORD:** The delicious blue-black grapes are borne profusely in medium-sized bunches and cannot be excelled for grape juice and jelly. The flavor is rich and distinctive. August.

➤ **DELAWARE:** Medium-sized red berries; sweet, juicy flesh; very productive table and wine variety. August.

➤ **FREDONIA:** Similar to Concord but larger and of finer appearance; ripens about 10 days earlier.

➤ **ISABELLA:** Large, glossy black, oval berries; table variety; sweet and juicy; immense bearer; fine for arbors. The strongest grower in this group. September.

➤ **NIAGARA:** Large, pale yellow berries; tender, sweet and juicy; very vigorous and productive. August to September.

➤ **PIERCE:** (California Concord). A sport of the Isabella and one of the finest American grapes for California. Similar to Concord, but the berries and bunches are larger and the vine is a stronger grower.

➤ **CONCORD SEEDLESS:** New; similar to regular Concord, but with smaller berries, and seedless. August.





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